

LIVESTOCK GRAZING MANAGEMENT APPENDIX

INTRODUCTION

Periodically the BLM issues Rangeland Program Summaries and updates to report on progress toward meeting land use plan objectives. The Big Dry Environmental Impact Statement Vegetation Allocation (USDI, BLM 1982b) is environmental documentation addressing livestock grazing. In that document the preferred alternative was for continued development for optimum range utilization. The most recent range and program summary update for the Big Dry Resource Area was issued March, 1984.

There have been eight new allotment management plans implemented and five existing allotment management plans revised since the rangeland program summary update in 1984. They are included in table 54 found at the end of this appendix. Range improvement projects completed by or in cooperation with the BLM since 1984 include 26 springs, 33 wells, 59 pits or reservoirs, 47 miles of fence, 56 miles of pipeline, and 3,273 acres of mechanical treatments. These projects were completed at a cost of \$739,773. Approximately 1,000 to 1,500 acres of noxious weeds have been treated with herbicides at an average annual cost of \$76,300.

No major surveys of vegetation condition or production have been conducted to verify changes. Data for allotment management plans in table 54 show a stable or upward trend. Most of the range improvements and activity plans have been developed on allotments where vegetation condition was not adequate to meet authorized levels of livestock use or where livestock use conflicted with wildlife or nonconsumptive uses.

No permanent increases in livestock preference have been authorized since 1984. Reductions in authorized livestock use have occurred from 1984 to 1991 on the allotments shown in table 51.

Range condition for allotments is found in table 52.

All allotments are issued a grazing permit or lease. Livestock use (grazing preference, kind of livestock, and season of use) is authorized under a permit or lease for a period of ten years or less (see table 53).

MONITORING

Monitoring is defined as the orderly collection, analysis, and interpretation of resource data to evaluate progress in meeting management objectives. Resource objectives from land use plans and activity plans establish a framework and criteria for determining the necessary level of monitoring intensity and reliability. Baseline vegetation inventory data is used as a basis for monitoring, where available. Monitoring includes inventories of vegetation and range improvements, vegetation measurements, use supervision, actual use surveys and climatic data.

Inventories of range condition will be used to adjust stocking rates or to determine trend. Inventories of range improvements are used to determine the condition of existing range improvements, the need for future range improvements, and their value to proper grazing management.

Vegetation measurements will include trend, production and utilization studies. Studies are designed to determine if objectives are being met or further revisions or adjustments are needed in management. Studies are located in key areas and are designed to measure success or failure towards meeting the objectives for the allotment. Key areas will show response to changes in management. One specific method of vegetation sampling will not be standardized since studies must be designed to fit the resources and objectives. Once a method of sampling is established, data

TABLE 51
ALLOTMENTS WITH LIVESTOCK USE REDUCTIONS

Allotment Number	Allotment Name	Original Preference (AUMs)	Current Preference (AUMs)	Initiated By	Protest
0727	Spring Coulee	388	317	BLM	None
1033	Degrand	470	161	Permittee	None
1147	Hegge	843	532	BLM	None

APPENDIX

Livestock

will continue to be gathered using this method as long as it continues to provide adequate information for evaluating the objective.

Actual use surveys are requested from the livestock operator to verify livestock numbers and use within an allotment. Use supervision is an important part of the monitoring program since compliance to proper stocking levels and season of use helps maintain and improve range condition.

ALLOTMENT CATEGORIZATION

Allotment categorization was developed to provide for the orderly administration of grazing by domestic livestock (BLM Manual H-1622, appendix 1). Grazing allotments and rangeland areas used for livestock grazing are assigned to an allotment category. Allotments are divided into three categories: “M” maintain, “I” improve, and “C” custodial. The allotment management plans in the planning area are categorized as shown in table 54 at the end of this appendix.

The following criteria are applied when placing an allotment into one of the three categories. An allotment does not have to meet all criteria to be placed in a particular category.

Category M maintain criteria include:

1. Greater than 70 percent of public land is in late seral potential natural community or is meeting desired plant community.
2. Allotments have moderate to high resource production potential and are producing near their potential.
3. No serious resource use conflicts or controversy exist.
4. Opportunities may exist for positive economic return from public investments.
5. Present management is accomplishing the desired results.

Category I improve criteria include:

1. Greater than 30 percent of public land is in early or mid-seral status or is not meeting desired plant community objectives.
2. Allotments have moderate to high resource production potential, but are producing at low to moderate levels.
3. Serious resource use conflicts or controversy exist.
4. Opportunities exist for positive economic return from public investments.
5. Opportunities exist to achieve the allotment’s potential through changes in management.
6. Unique values require management emphasis.

Category C custodial criteria include:

1. Present ecological status is not a factor.
2. Allotments have low resource production potential and are producing near their potential.
3. Limited resource use conflicts or controversy may exist.
4. Opportunities for positive economic return from public investments do not exist, or are constrained by technological or economic factors.
5. Present management is accomplishing the desired results.
6. Percent of public land and number of acres does not provide for effective management influence by the BLM.

Adjustments

Allotments can be moved from one category to another as new information becomes available, resource conditions change, or management activities are implemented. Such changes must be consistent with the category criteria discussed above. Such changes must also be supported by a documented analysis showing the basis for the change. An allotment in “I” category can be moved to a “M” category prior to reaching >70 percent for public land in good or excellent condition if an allotment management plan or similar activity plan is developed and range condition is in an upward trend. This will allow for BLM resources to shift to allotments with higher priorities and conflicts.

Consultation

To be meaningful, categorization requires public involvement. The District and Area Managers are the authorized officers responsible for determining the appropriate timing and method for achieving the necessary consultation. The public participation requirements of resource management planning are used when timing permits. At a minimum, the authorized officer will ensure consultation with affected rangeland users, resource management agencies, and other affected parties during the selection and application of category criteria, placement of allotments into categories, and subsequent evaluations to determine needed changes in the placement of allotments. Consultation efforts will be directed toward gaining an understanding of the role of categorization in developing priorities, defining management objectives, and developing a monitoring and evaluation program as defined in BLM Manual 1622. When proposing an allotment management plan, the permittee and any other affected party must be consulted.

Relationship to the Rangeland Resource Program

The intent of categorization of allotments is to concentrate funding and on-the-ground management efforts to those allotments where grazing management is needed to improve the resources, or the Area Manager will use the categorization of allotments to assign priorities and select allotments for: (1) implementing management actions (through activity planning), (2) distributing funds, (3) monitoring and evaluation (including intensity), and (4) implementing other aspects of the rangeland resource program. The program and related activities are implemented through administrative and management policies and procedures defined in BLM Manuals 4100, 4400, and 1622.

Allotments With Proposed Allotment Management Plans

Potential allotment management plans are primarily "I" category allotments with high priority or opportunity for allotment management plan development.

0102 - Category I

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Vegetation condition is unsatisfactory and overutilization of vegetation.

Objectives: Develop grazing management for improved vegetation condition and cover.

0139 - Category I

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Overutilization of vegetation. Unreliable water in west end. Range and watershed condition is unsatisfactory.

Objectives: Develop grazing management for improved vegetation and watershed condition.

0351 - Category I

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Vegetation condition is unsatisfactory and overutilization of vegetation.

Objectives: Develop grazing management for improved vegetation condition and cover.

0386 - Category I

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Unsatisfactory vegetation condition.

Objectives: Improve vegetation condition through grazing management.

0389 - Category I

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Hungry and Cheer creeks have rushes, buffaloberry, willow, and

green ash. Portions of the uplands are dominated by blue grama. Riparian areas and uplands have been overutilized by livestock. Degraded water quality.

Objectives: Increase cover of rushes, buffaloberry, willow, and ash. Implement a grazing system with proper stocking levels. Improve ecological status of uplands.

0419 - Category M

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Wilderness study area, elk and deer habitat.

Objectives: Continue grazing management to limit conflict with other uses.

0720 - Category I

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Excessive soil erosion, degraded riparian vegetation along O'Fallon Creek, unsatisfactory vegetation condition, and heavy utilization. Potential habitat improvement for turkey, grouse, beaver, and deer.

Objectives: Develop grazing management for improved vegetation condition and cover, improved riparian, and adequate residual cover for ground nesting birds.

1048 and 1182 - Category I

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Range condition is unsatisfactory, formerly a heavy infestation of leafy spurge which has decreased in density but still extensively scattered, poor livestock distribution, areas with compacted soil layers supporting blue grama and club moss. Checkerboard land pattern.

Objectives: Improve and maintain ecological condition to late seral or higher. Improve distribution by developing water and fencing. Apply mechanical treatment with livestock management to improve vegetation productivity. Control noxious weeds, including leafy spurge, with a combination of methods including chemical and biological.

1052 - Category I

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Vegetation condition is unsatisfactory.

Objectives: Improve vegetation condition.

1059 and 1246 - Category I

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Limited water in uplands. Custer Creek vegetation not at potential. Unsatisfactory vegetation condition. Soil and vegetation loss in prairie dog towns. Leafy spurge. Antelope and deer winter range. Sage grouse, waterfowl, and beaver habitat. Wilderness Study Area.

Objectives: Develop water, fences, and grazing management for improving vegetation, riparian and watershed condition. Mechanical treatment of areas for

improved vegetation production. Maintain adequate levels of sagebrush for grouse, antelope and deer. Control prairie dogs if the area is not selected as a black-footed ferret reintroduction site. Control noxious weeds.

1069 and 1330 - Category I

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Past disproportionate use due to lack of water and a seasonal use pattern resulted in range deterioration on portions of the allotment. Management of the allotment has improved through the years. Mule deer, antelope, sage grouse, and raptors have been observed. Ferruginous hawks are present and are listed as a species of special concern.

Objectives: Improve ecological status through grazing management and insure that management actions do not negatively impact ferruginous hawks or their habitat.

1124 - Category M

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Lacks water and management system, as ownership has been unstable and overgrazing has occurred.

Objectives: Collect information and make recommendation.

1226 - Category I

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Contains a high density of green ash draws (41 acres), plus two stands of aspen. Twenty-five percent of the green ash draws have inadequate regeneration and 25 percent of the range in mid seral status.

Objectives: Improve regeneration of green ash and improve ecological status.

1247 - Category M

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Allotment with livestock distribution problems.

Objectives: Present management is improving vegetation, monitor to ensure improvement continues.

1287 - Category I

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Extensive green ash draws that are grazed summer long, resulting in a loss in regeneration and woody understory.

Objectives: Develop a grazing system for improved woody regeneration and livestock distribution.

1313 - Category I

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Limited water sources in the uplands resulting in disproportionate use of riparian area along Ten Mile Creek and Powder River and areas adjacent to the riparian area. Leafy spurge. Soil loss and vegetation loss caused by prairie

dogs. Improve mule and white-tailed deer habitat.

Objective: Improve distribution by developing water in the uplands and provide for improvement of riparian and vegetation condition. Control noxious weeds.

1341 - Category I

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Unsatisfactory range condition and poor livestock distribution.

Objectives: Develop water and fence to provide for improved grazing management and vegetation condition.

1342 - Category I

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: O'Fallon Creek not at potential but showing improvement. Unsatisfactory vegetation condition. Scattered land pattern. Leafy spurge. Prairie dog town.

Objectives: Develop water for improved distribution, flexibility for livestock management, and continue riparian improvement. Control noxious weeds.

1355 - Category I

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Limited water and poor livestock distribution. Hardwood draws. Allotment consists of two pastures separated by six miles. Crested wheatgrass.

Objectives: Provide for improved livestock distribution and maintenance of green ash draws.

1494 and 1495 - Category "I"

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Unsatisfactory range condition. Leafy spurge. Overutilization.

Objectives: Improve range condition through a grazing system. Control noxious weeds.

"I" Category Allotments With Allotment Management Plans

The following "I" category allotment management plans have been developed, but the resource objectives for the allotments are not being met.

0071

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: No use supervision, sporadic monitoring with no evaluation or recommendations.

Objectives: Collect adequate information for evaluation and recommendations.

0093

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Management problem, lack of water, riparian values.

Objectives: Improve grazing management and water availability.

0155

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Overgrazing, management problems.

Objectives: Improve grazing management and establish proper stocking.

0283

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Overgrazing, poor livestock distribution.

Objectives: Establish proper stocking and improve distribution.

0385

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Range condition, wildlife habitat, allotment management plan revision needed, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service plan coordination, livestock utilization.

Objectives: Improve vegetation condition through coordination of grazing management with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

0422

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Nondependable livestock water, lack of use supervision, lack of management, riparian and wildlife concerns, and public access.

Objectives: Develop a grazing schedule, improve use supervision, improve public access.

1015 and 1301

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Unsatisfactory range condition, wildlife values.

Objectives: Revise AMP for improvement of vegetation condition and wildlife habitat.

1174 and 1304

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Antelope, mule deer, raptors, waterfowl, and long-billed curlews are common. Some areas of fair condition resulted, due to a seasonal use pattern and poor distribution on portions of the allotment.

Objectives: An allotment management plan was implemented in 1992 with a goal of improving ecological status in key areas.

1236

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Lack of regeneration in green ash draws.

Objectives: Provide for regeneration of green ash and associated species.

1249

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: The original allotment management plan was outdated and portions of the allotment remain in mid-ecological status. An allotment management plan revision was recently com-

pleted.

Objectives: Increase chokecherry, rose, and green ash on suitable sites and improve ecological status.

1254

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Range condition, prairie dogs, Cherry Creek Dam project, history of varying ownership, riparian values along Yellowstone River and Cherry Creek.

Objectives: Develop grazing system.

1282

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: An area with springs and gravelly drainages. It has potential for willows, cottonwoods, and possibly green ash. Some areas in low ecological status. Antelope and upland game birds. Vegetation condition had improved due to a 1975 allotment management plan and the 1992 revision was developed for improvement of the uplands and riparian areas.

Objectives: Improve ecological status and increase woody riparian species and vegetation cover in the drainages.

1303

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: The majority of the allotment is in fair condition.

Objectives: Improve livestock distribution and utilization of crested wheatgrass. Increase needleandthread and western wheatgrass while decreasing blue grama and red three-awn grass.

1312 and 1327

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: High value riparian area.

Objectives: Improve riparian vegetation.

Remaining “T” Category Allotments

The remaining “T” category allotments are allotments where allotment management plans could be developed or resource conflicts could be resolved with other methods.

0014

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Unsatisfactory range condition. Opportunity for riparian vegetation improvement. Multiple ownership of livestock.

Objectives: Improve grazing management.

0025

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Land pattern, percent public land, utilization along Glendive Creek.

Objectives: Develop grazing schedule in coordination with Soil Conservation Service ranch plan.

0030

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Range condition.
Objectives: Collect information and develop recommendation.

0057

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Fair range condition with areas of clubmoss and blue grama.
Objectives: Improve vegetation production and condition through mechanical treatment and grazing management.

0216

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Management problem.
Objectives: Improve use supervision and grazing management.

0287

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Lack of vegetation cover, multiple ownership, high value riparian area.
Objectives: Improve inventory and establish grazing management.

0310

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Unsatisfactory range condition.
Objectives: Improve vegetation condition.

0373

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Scattered land pattern, stocking level, no use supervision.
Objectives: Develop management coordination, cooperation with soil conservation service and permittee.

0405

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Unsatisfactory range condition. Historical overutilization. Scattered land pattern.
Objectives: Establish grazing management and proper stocking.

0653

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: History of heavy utilization. Presently fair condition with upward trend. Riparian values.
Objectives: Establish a grazing system.

0655

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Heavy utilization. Vegetation having poor vigor. Fair range condition and excessive soil erosion.
Objectives: Improve grazing management and establish proper stocking.

1017

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Vegetation con-

dition and production below potential. Scattered land pattern.

Objectives: Review allotment for reconsideration of categorization due to scattered land pattern.

1021

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Lack of vegetation cover. Increase in broom snakeweed.
Objectives: Review allotment and make recommendation.

1121

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Leafy spurge, scattered land pattern, small percent public land.
Objectives: Biological control of spurge and coordinated management.

1122

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Fair range condition. Scattered land pattern.
Objectives: Improve range condition through improved grazing management.

1142

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Vegetation condition is not at potential. Checkerboard land pattern.
Objectives: Develop or document grazing management in cooperation with operator.

1154

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Overutilization occurs in spring and fall. Unsatisfactory range condition.
Objectives: Establish grazing management and proper stocking.

1168

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Range condition.
Objectives: Collect adequate information for recommendation.

1189

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Potential for improved green ash draws.
Objectives: Provide vegetative cover for ground nesting birds. Develop grazing system which allows for establishment and maintenance of hardwood and browse species.

1232

Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Summer-long grazing has limited woody understory in green ash draws.
Objectives: Increase regeneration of woody understory.

- 1237**
Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Summer-long grazing has limited woody understory in green ash draws.
Objectives: Increase regeneration of woody understory.
- 1256**
Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Hardwood draws with limited regeneration. Limited water sources resulting in poor livestock distribution. Lack of cover for sharp-tailed grouse. Continuous grazing throughout growing season.
Objectives: Schedule grazing to allow for regeneration of hardwoods and provide for sharp-tailed grouse cover and habitat. Develop water where practical for improved distribution.
- 1279**
Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Unsatisfactory range condition. Heavy utilization.
Objectives: Inventory for carrying capacity.
- 1298**
Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Fair range condition, sage grouse, antelope and mule deer habitat.
Objectives: Develop water and grazing system for improved vegetation condition.
- 1302**
Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Unsatisfactory range condition.
Objectives: Collect information and make recommendation.
- 1306**
Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Poor to fair range condition adjacent to riparian area. Opportunity for riparian condition improvement.
Objectives: Develop water and grazing management for improved distribution and decrease dependency on the riparian area.
- 1328**
Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Checkerboard land pattern. Vegetation condition below potential.
Objectives: Opportunity for water development and improvement by grazing system.
- 1349**
Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Fair range condition.
Objectives: Collect adequate information for recommendation.
- 1361**
Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Utilization patterns, inadequate range improvements.
- Objectives:** Use supervision for billing authorization, season of use adjustment.
- 1401**
Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Scattered land pattern, percent public land limits options, limited water, past historical use.
Objectives: Develop grazing schedule in coordination with Soil Conservation Service ranch plan.
- 1415**
Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Base operation practices, early season use, common allotment area.
Objectives: Use supervision, coordinate grazing schedule with Soil Conservation Service.
- 1436**
Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Heavy utilization.
Objectives: Establish proper stocking and grazing management.
- 1438**
Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: This allotment has a scattered land pattern and is adjacent to Makoshika State Park. It includes unique geologic features. There are opportunities for day hiking, sightseeing, and wildlife viewing. Poor livestock distribution.
Objectives: Maintain and improve vegetation conditions while managing livestock grazing in harmony with recreational uses.
- 1482**
Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Unsatisfactory range condition.
Objectives: Improve vegetation condition.
- 1513**
Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Small tract of public land with riparian vegetation well below potential.
Objectives: Develop grazing strategy for riparian improvement.
- 1528**
Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Combined with allotment 1121. Utilization problem.
Objectives: Coordinate management.
- 1669**
Opportunities/Problems/Conflicts: Unsatisfactory condition, allotment management plan outdated, proposed wilderness area which limits grazing management options.
Objectives: Develop a grazing system for improvement of vegetation condition.